

What Does Accreditation Mean?



Accreditation means the recognition of an agency or institution as conforming to a body of standards related to several specific disciplines. Accreditation is awarded to a law enforcement agency upon demonstration of voluntary commitment to law enforcement excellence by living up to a body of standards deemed essential to the protection of the life, health, safety, and rights of the citizens it serves and having exemplified the best professional practices in the conduct of its responsibilities.

What Is CALEA?

The accreditation concept has a long history in our nation in schools and hospitals. Law enforcement accreditation has a relatively recent history by comparison. In 1979, The Commission on the Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) was created through the combined efforts of four major law enforcement organizations:

- * The International Associations of Chiefs of Police,
- * The National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives,
- * The National Sheriffs' Association, and
- * The Police Executive Research Forum.

These organizations continue to serve in an advisory capacity to the Commission and are responsible for appointment of members to the Commission's Board.

CALEA is a non-profit organization whose operating expenses are defrayed by fees paid by organizations voluntarily participating in the accreditation process.

Goals of CALEA

- ◇ To formalize essential management procedures
- ◇ To establish fair and non-discriminatory personnel practices
- ◇ To solidify interagency cooperation and coordination
- ◇ To provide a solid review of policy and procedures measured against professional standards
- ◇ To provide international recognition and a venue for employee pride and morale
- ◇ To insulate against civil litigation
- ◇ To inspire a sense of well being and safety in the hearts and minds of our community

The 481 accreditation standards cover six major law enforcement subjects:

1. Law Enforcement Role, Responsibilities, and Relationships;
2. Organization, management, and administration;
3. The Personnel Structure;
4. The Personnel Process;
5. Law Enforcement Operations, Operations Support and Traffic Operations;
6. Detainee and Court-Related Activities; and
7. Auxiliary and Technical Services.

Accreditation is based on the agency's size and the functions it performs.

Over 1,600 public safety agencies, located in the United States, Canada, Barbados, and Mexico, are in the CALEA process at one stage or another. In the United States, approximately 24 percent of all full-time state or local law enforcement officers work at CALEA Accredited or Recognized agencies.

"Standards building trust. Trust building freedom. This is the great charge – the great trust – of law enforcement in our nation." Attorney General John Ashcroft at the Conference of the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies. St. Louis, Missouri - July 26, 2001.

What Are the Benefits of Accreditation?

• GREATER ACCOUNTABILITY

Gives the police chief a proven management system of written directives, sound training, clearly defined lines of authority, and routine reports that support decision-making and resource allocation.

• GREATER SUPPORT FROM GOVERNMENTAL OFFICIALS

Provides evidence of an agency's commitment to excellence in leadership, resource management, and service delivery, thus breeding more confidence in the agency's ability to operate efficiently and meet community needs.

• INCREASED COMMUNITY ADVOCACY

Embodies the precepts of community policing. It creates a forum in which police and citizens work together to prevent and control crime. This partnership helps citizens understand the challenges confronting law enforcement and gives law enforcement clear direction about community expectations.

• CONTROLLED LIABILITY INSURANCE COSTS

Makes it easier for agencies to purchase police liability insurance.

• RECOGNITION FOR EXCELLENCE

Symbolizes an agency's professionalism, excellence, and competence.

**Message From
Michael T. Frazier, Chief of Police**

The men and women of the Surprise Police Department take pride in complying with the internationally recognized police standards set forth by CALEA. The SPD compliance has resulted in our:

- *Development of a standardized set of comprehensive, well thought-out written directives/policies,*
- *Advanced capability to generate reports and analyses to make informed management decisions,*
- *Enhanced relationship with the community,*
- *Higher level of SPD accountability,*
- *Reduction of liability and risk exposure, and*
- *SPD culture characterized by the relentless pursuit of excellence.*

After achieving initial accreditation in 2007, the SPD staff continued its commitment to excellence and continual improvement. In November 2013, this commitment was rewarded with a third review and successful reaccreditation. SPD personnel do not view CALEA accreditation as an exercise in meeting paperwork requirements, but rather an exercise in building a solid foundation for developing a world-class police agency. In maintaining compliance with 480 police standards, we have the confidence that the Surprise Police Department accomplishes its safety and security mission consistently, competently, equitably, and professionally.

**For further information on
Accreditation, write or call:**

**The Commission on Accreditation
for Law Enforcement Agencies**
13575 Heathcoat Blvd., Ste. 320
Gainesville, VA 22030-2215
703-352-4225
www.calea.org

OR

Surprise Police Department
Professional Standards Unit
Ms. Shaughna Vaughan
Accreditation Manager
14250 W. Statler Plaza, Suite 103
Surprise, AZ 85374-7481
623-222-4248
shaughna.vaughan@surpriseaz.gov



**Surprise
Police
Department**



ACCREDITATION